

NEWSLETTER 2005 – 2006

We would like to remind members that, while real progress is being made through our campaigns, the fight is far from over. Our aim is to ensure that all industrial and commercial activities, both here and in Spain, are carried out to the highest possible standards. The ESG will not desist in its efforts to see best practice adopted and the health of our communities and better protection of our environment is achieved.

Thanks for your support!!



“for a better environment”

Legal Campaign: European Commission trips to Brussels and Strasbourg



July 2005 – Brussels



February 2006 – Strasbourg

Brief update: Last summer the ESG took a delegation to Brussels where it was following up on its official complaint against unacceptable levels of pollution in the bay, on which 4 separate files had been submitted since November 2002. ESG's Janet Howitt was accompanied by: David Dumas QC of Hassans, Denny Larson of Bucket Brigades worldwide, Professor Benach, a public health expert from the University Pompeu, Barcelona. By the way the expenses for this trip were met with the funds raised through the community – many thanks to all those who contributed!! The ESG presented reports on the repeated failure by the Spanish authorities to ensure that environmental protection is practised to EU norms and standards. It was put to the Commission that Spain was not controlling or monitoring its **benzene** emissions, particularly fugitive emissions. The EC legal department requested Spain to comply immediately with its directive on providing benzene data to the public. This data has slowly been sent to the EC who has been analysing it for some time.

Hot off the press!! The ESG and advisors have just returned from Strasbourg from a meeting with the Environment Commissioner, Mr. Stavros Dimas, organised by MEP Neil Parish and funded by Hassans. With a detailed presentation of the situation in the Bay and pollution from industry, the Commissioner committed to lend his assistance in ensuring that European environmental laws are adhered to and would revert to us within a fortnight (Strasbourg trip included: Henry Pinna, Janet Howitt, David Dumas QC, Professor Benach supported by MEP's Parish from the UK and Hammerstein from Spain). **Watch out in the news and on our website for an update!**

Professor Benach is the author of the “Atlas de Mortalidad” studies which reveal a striking cluster of excess mortality in the south west of Spain thought to be caused by environmental and occupational factors. The ESG have invited him to Gibraltar on two occasions and have set up a meeting with the **Ministers of Health and Environment** as well as organised a formal presentation to **Hassans Law firm** on the Professors work and the progress that has been made with respect to legal proceedings with the European Commission. The ESG hopes to invite the Professor Back to Gibraltar in June 2006 this time to give a public presentation on his work which the group believes many will find of great interest. ESG Committee members C. Walsh and J. Scott contributed greatly to the quality of work prepared for these important presentations.

(In photo: L. Baglietto head of Litigation Hassans, ESG E.Teuma, C.Walsh, Prof Benach, ESG J.Howitt, David Dumas QC Hassans, ESG P.Scott and J.Scott)





about 1000 bags of rubbish were collected together with huge piles of wood, metal, furniture, motorbikes and other unexpected finds. It was estimated that between 30-40 tonnes of rubbish was lifted from our streets, green areas, underwater site; and all this during one weekend

WHAT A SUCCESS!!!

Clean up the World 2006 just around the corner!! Be sure to sign up in good time

Thanks to the ESG, Gibraltar became a member of Clean up the World International in 2005 joining over 100 countries who took part (over 30 million volunteers worldwide!) During the same weekend, 16th to 18th September, 3-400 volunteers cleaned various areas around the Rock supported by assistance from twenty organisations, govt. depts, essential services, businesses, media support. The ESG also organised a green parade and exhibition where schools, dance groups, NGO's, musicians and artists took part to celebrate and draw attention to our environment. The Minister for the Environment Jaime Netto endorsed the campaign at the square and later donned gloves with his family to help one of the clean-up teams in Europa!



Square celebrations for CUTW weekend!



Rubbish from our seabed and green areas

Result: It is encouraging to note that after the clean up Government pledged to review its existing cleaning contract and areas and would be seeking to improve the situation. We shall be reminding them of the need to move on other aspects of the problem by repeating the clean up this year. We also want to see recycling, education programmes, more enforcement, and more provision for litter.

For more info on the **Clean up the World Campaign** please refer to www.cleanuptheworld.org

- The local campaign was greatly assisted by the loan of premises by the Heritage Trust which was beautifully decorated by Anna Coelho (and a few friends!) who also took care of the production of Tee Shirts all individually painted. Volunteers helped in the last few weeks to produce the quantities needed
- GBC produced an energetic documentary of the clean up reflecting the effort and enthusiasm and concern held by so many in our community to protect and look after our environment!! Thanks to the GBC!! Other media such as the Chronicle also gave full support with great coverage.

Cycle ride 2005



Great community support and spirit was evident from this fund raising and awareness campaign



The second of its kind and this time over double the cyclists taking part – ESG Ewen Clinton organised the ride to promote the need for renewable energy and draw attention to the air and noise pollution from the generating stations in Gibraltar. Ride began outside OESCO and took the cyclists through unspoilt countryside finishing off in Facinas in a wind farm area. The awareness created by the ride is hoped to create more pressure for change. Monies raised during this campaign were donated to GBC Open Day.

Other important matters:-

Benzene and Hydrogen Sulfide:- As many of you will know, benzene has been in the “air” this year. Possible sources are the Oil Refinery, bunkering, traffic fumes and handling and storage of fuel. Hydrogen Sulfide is another chemical believed to be causing discomfort and possible harm and these issues are being investigated by the ESG to ensure that the sources are eliminated. The group plans to step up its campaign and calls for the members and public at large to remain vigilant and continue to report incidences of heavy smells. If you refer to website: www.gibraltairairquality.gi you can see for yourself what our air monitoring stations in Gibraltar are picking up.

Environmental Charter: - The ESG was consulted by the Ministry for the Environment for input into the drawing up of Gibraltar’s Environmental Charter. A lengthy submission ensured that all of the concerns held by the group and its membership were covered. It is hoped that the charter will be published this year.

Local traffic:- The ESG is very concerned with the lack of a proper working traffic model, integrated public transport system and “management” of the road space which is shared by so many users. Cycling and walking paths could be introduced and some system of control over car use would be sensible as well as good for the health! Given that one of the main sources of pollution comes from our traffic (or so Govt says) it is all the more important that this be tackled for all our benefit. A free public transport system would encourage many of us to leave cars behind when travelling alone. With the ever increasing number of large developments going up around Gibraltar the need for a traffic model gauging impacts from existing and new developments is all the more important.

Updated Environmental Development Plan for Gibraltar: Where is the plan which should be guiding what and how we develop Gibraltar? The recent spate of developments confirms the urgent need for this plan and there is no excuse for its continued delay.

Power Generation for Gibraltar: Gibraltar should be investing in renewable energy looking at phasing in clean energy sources over a period of time. It is regrettable that the current Govt does not appear interested or committed to working within a sustainable framework for Gibraltar. The ESG will continue to lobby.

Environmental Safety Group – Mailbox 561, Suite 223, Imossi House, 1/5 Irish Town, Gibraltar

Printed on 100% recycled paper

Gibraltar's environmental watchdog!

Support upcoming global events for our environment

ESG on air !!!

RADIO BROADCASTS every fortnight **BY ESG COMMITTEE MEMBERS** - some examples of what we cover are:-

- **RENEWABLE ENERGY!** Solar thermal, tidal energy, wind, gas turbine among others
 - **RECYCLING & WASTE FACILITIES** here & Spain
 - **PEAK OIL**
 - **ROLE OF NGO'S**
 - **EC COMPLAINT** regular update
 - **CLEAN UP THE WORLD GIB**
 - **BAY BUCKET BRIGADE** update
 - **DIESEL POWER STATIONS** and their problems
 - **TECHNICAL SUPPORT BY EXPERTS SUCH AS PROFESSOR BENACH, DENNY LARSON AND DAVID DUMAS HASSANS QC**
- AND MUCH MORE! ON OUR WEBSITE**

www.esg-gib.net

Clean up Events, World Environment and Earth Day etc.

Call us if you have a problem or see or smell something toxic! On:
43156/ 50530/ 74467/ 78067

Exhaust free day supported by FOE, GONHS and ESG

See these useful websites:

www.esg-gib.net
www.gonhs.org
www.gibraltarairquality.gi
www.eper.cec.eu.int
www.refineryreform.org
www.cleanuptheworld.org
www.frogib.motime.com
www.globalresponse.org
www.planetark.com
www.paperback.com
www.ecologicalfootrpint.org
www.greenshop.co.uk
www.carbontrust.co.uk

Breaking news:

- **ESG** joined a **new cross border forum** to demand an end to industrial pollution and for immediate medical studies to prove the impact this is having on **ALL** our health –
- **Toxic tour** planned for April for the MEPs who supported our petition in Strasbourg recently
- **World Earth Day ESG** stall at Piazza – please come along we'd love to talk to you and hear your views! **22nd April 2006**